

Darfur but for the whole of Sudan, as well as the broader region.

If this U.N. resolution is passed as it currently stands, we can expect the Sudanese Government to try to evade its requirements and agreements without a single consequence. Should that happen, the toll of the genocide in Darfur will continue to mount—in lives lost, in persons displaced, and in fundamental human values that the international community has failed to uphold.

I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Illinois.

Mr. DURBIN. How much time remains in morning business?

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. One minute on the Democratic side and 1 minute on the Republican side.

Mr. DURBIN. I yield back the remaining time on our side and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. BAUCUS. I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Morning business is closed.

SMALL BUSINESS TAX RELIEF ACT OF 2007

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to consideration of H.R. 976, which the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 976) to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide tax relief for small businesses, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 2530

Mr. BAUCUS. I call up my amendment at the desk.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Montana [Mr. BAUCUS], for himself, Mr. GRASSLEY, Mr. ROCKEFELLER, and Mr. HATCH, proposes an amendment numbered 2530.

Mr. BAUCUS. I ask unanimous consent that reading of the amendment be dispensed with.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

(The amendment is printed in today's RECORD under "Text of Amendments.")

Mr. BAUCUS. Mr. President, the Senate now has before it the reauthorization of the Children's Health Insurance Program, otherwise known as CHIP. Pending is a substitute amendment that reflects the bill reported by the

Finance Committee by a vote of 17 to 4, a strong bipartisan vote.

The bipartisan package Finance Committee colleagues and I crafted will give millions more American children the healthy start they need to lead a long, productive life.

Behind me is a photo of Abigale. Who is Abigale? Abigale is from Missoula, MT. At the time the photo was taken she was 4 years old. Abigale has two siblings, and they live with their mother and father. All three of the children participate in the Montana Children's Health Insurance Program. When Abigale was 2½ years old, she fell down, split her head open and had to have nine stitches. Her medical care was covered by the Children's Health Insurance Program. That same year her 6-year-old brother broke his arm twice and CHIP paid for the surgery, the hospital stay, and all of the medical care he received.

Fawn, Abigale's mother, is thankful to have CHIP not only for the emergency care it provides but also it helps immunize children against childhood diseases and allows them to get the checkups they need for school each year.

Not having health insurance clearly affects a child's life. Uninsured kids do not go to the doctor. They do not have checkups. They remain undiagnosed for serious childhood conditions such as asthma and diabetes. They do not have vaccinations, and they put themselves and their schoolmates at risk for serious illnesses. Kids without health insurance do not have eye exams and are less likely to get glasses, and often cannot see the chalkboard at school. They are not diagnosed with learning disabilities, and they struggle through their classes. Kids who do not have insurance do not see the dentist. They do not get their cavities filled. They do not get braces, and they risk serious illness due to poor dental health. Adequate health care creates a critical foundation for a healthy life.

No one wants innocent children to suffer. Investing in children's health is the compassionate choice, but it is more than that. Insuring our children is a smart economic investment in our Nation's future. Why? Because it is the only choice, if we wish to imbue future generations with strong minds and healthy bodies. It is quite simple. Health insurance has a direct effect on a child's performance at school. Healthy children are more likely to go to school, and they are more likely to do well in school. Then they are more likely to become productive members of the workforce.

Children with health insurance are less likely to receive expensive emergency room care. Parents of children with health insurance are less likely to miss days at work to care for their sick children. When America insures our children, we are all better off, we all benefit.

Health insurance is especially important to the success of minority popu-

lations. African-American, Hispanic, and Native American children are all less likely to have health insurance. They are more likely to be poor. Providing affordable coverage is one of the best ways to reduce the gap for these kids.

CHIP has already helped to narrow racial and ethnic disparities in access to care among low-income children. But we can do better. We can continue to narrow that gap.

Health insurance is also a key ingredient to alleviating child poverty. Low-income families without insurance often get stuck in a bitter cycle of medical debt. Parents struggling to make ends meet should not have to choose between buying asthma inhalers for their children and putting dinner on the table.

So I hope my fellow Senators will make the right choice, the only choice. I hope they will join me in making our children's future, and America's future, a brighter one.

I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Vermont.

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. President, this debate is not just about extending health care to our children. It is about our national priorities. It is about who we are as a nation. It is about which side we are on.

For the last 6 years, we have had a President who has insisted, as one of his major priorities, on more and more tax breaks for the very wealthiest people in our country. People who are worth millions of dollars and people who are worth billions of dollars have, collectively, received hundreds and hundreds of billions of dollars in tax breaks. But when it comes to those people most in need, those people who are most vulnerable, including the children of our country—the kids who are 2 or 3 years of age—who have health care needs, this President, tragically and embarrassingly, has not been there. If you are wealthy and powerful, he is there. If you are a child and vulnerable, AWOL—he is not listening. In fact, he has been in opposition.

It is no secret to the American people that our current health care system is disintegrating. Today, 46 million Americans, including over 9 million children, have no health insurance whatsoever, and tens of millions more are underinsured, with high premiums and copayments. Costs are soaring every single year, and small businesses in my State of Vermont and throughout this country are no longer, in many cases, able to offer any health insurance. Throughout the country today workers are being asked to pay a higher and higher percentage of the cost of their health insurance, and many of them cannot afford to do that because health insurance premiums have been rising four times faster than workers' earnings since the year 2000.

In the midst of all of that—more and more uninsured, costs soaring—we end up spending twice as much per capita